

Universal Design for Learning in Action

100 Ways to Teach All Learners

by

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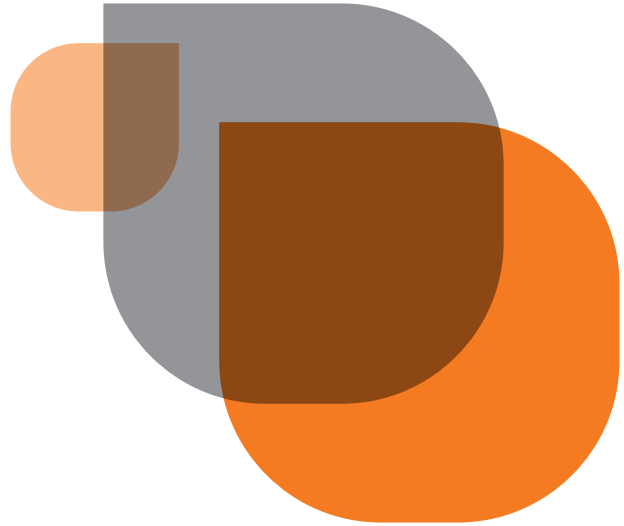
Contents

About the Author	ix
Acknowledgments	xi
Section I Overview	
Foundational Theories	2
How Do All of These Foundational Theories Fit Together?	11
What Does This Book Add to All of These Theories?	12
Addressing Barriers and Misconceptions	13
Format of the Book.....	15
Section II Strategies for Engagement	
Providing Multiple Means of Engagement	18
Considerations.....	19
Engagement Through Space: Bulletin Board Borders	21
Engagement Through Space: Seating.....	22
Engagement Through Space: Lighting	24
Engagement Through Materials: Fidget Toys	25
Engagement Through Materials: Professional Equipment.....	26
Engagement Through Materials: Writing Surfaces.....	27
Engagement Through Classroom Management: Jobs	29
Engagement Through Classroom Management: Meetings.....	31
Engagement Through Classroom Management: Smarty Pants.....	33
Engagement Through Classroom Management: Organized Classroom.....	35
Engagement Through Technology: Interactive Whiteboards	37
Engagement Through Technology: Videoconferencing.....	39
Engagement Through Technology: Blogs.....	40
Engagement Through Content Instruction: Tactile Activities	42
Engagement Through Content Instruction: Bag of Writing Ideas.....	44
Engagement Through Content Instruction: Mnemonics	45
Engagement Through Content Instruction: Computer Software Programs	46
Engagement Through Social Interaction: Games.....	47
Engagement Through Social Interaction: Grouping.....	48

Engagement Through Social Interaction: Dice	49
Engagement Through Social Interaction: Redefine Bullying	50
Engagement Through Executive Functions: Using the Arts	52
Engagement Through Executive Functions: Cue Signals	54
Engagement Through Executive Functions: Minecraft Video Game.....	56
Engagement Through Transition to Adulthood: Bingo	57
Engagement Through Transition to Adulthood: Real-Life Situations	58
Engagement Through Transition to Adulthood: Invite People to Meetings	60
Section III Strategies for Input	
Providing Multiple Means of Input.....	62
Considerations.....	63
Input Through Space: Food, Drinks, and Gum.....	66
Input Through Space: Nooks.....	68
Input Through Materials: Visually Accessible Text.....	69
Input Through Materials: Auditory Books	70
Input Through Materials: Tactile Books.....	71
Input Through Materials: Self-Amplifiers.....	72
Input Through Classroom Management: Schedules	73
Input Through Classroom Management: Syn-naps	74
Input Through Classroom Management: 10:2 Theory	75
Input Through Technology: FM-Adapted Computer Stations.....	76
Input Through Technology: Digital Text or E-books.....	77
Input Through Technology: Note-Taking Hardware and Software	79
Input Through Technology: Access to Auditory Input.....	81
Input Through Technology: Access to Visual Input.....	83
Input Through Content Instruction: Peer-Mediated Instruction	85
Input Through Content Instruction: Study Snippets	86
Input Through Content Instruction: Responsive Resource Posters	87
Input Through Content Instruction: Humor	88
Input Through Content Instruction: Visualizing.....	89
Input Through Content Instruction: Continuum of Abstractness	90
Input Through Content Instruction: Accessible Presentation Software	91
Input Through Social Interaction: Social Stories.....	93
Input Through Social Interaction: Social Skill Autopsy	94
Input Through Social Interaction: Gaming Technology	95
Input Through Executive Functions: Planner Options.....	97
Input Through Executive Functions: Web-Based Materials and Information.....	99
Input Through Executive Functions: Graphic Organizers	101
Input Through Executive Functions: Timers	103
Input Through Transition to Adulthood: Resource Ring	105
Input Through Transition to Adulthood: A-to-C Chart	106
Input Through Transition to Adulthood: Visual Goal Plan	108
Section IV Strategies for Output	
Providing Multiple Means of Output	110
Considerations.....	111
Output Through Space: Mobility Supports	114
Output Through Space: Student-Created Bulletin Boards	116

Output Through Materials: Coded Assignments	117
Output Through Materials: Supports for Interactive Whiteboards	118
Output Through Materials: Writing Supports	120
Output Through Materials: Universal Tools.....	122
Output Through Classroom Management: Integrative Movement	123
Output Through Classroom Management: Transition Areas	125
Output Through Classroom Management: Coded Classroom.....	127
Output Through Technology: Photo Essay	128
Output Through Technology: Universal Computer Equipment	129
Output Through Technology: Communication Supports	130
Output Through Content Instruction: Graph Paper.....	132
Output Through Content Instruction: Socratic Seminars	134
Output Through Content Instruction: Student Recordings and Videos.....	135
Output Through Content Instruction: Prequestions	137
Output Through Content Instruction: Reading Reflection Cards.....	138
Output Through Content Instruction: Music	139
Output Through Content Instruction: Drawing	140
Output Through Social Interaction: Response Scales	141
Output Through Social Interaction: Mix-Freeze-Pair.....	143
Output Through Social Interaction: Rally Table	144
Output Through Executive Functions: Rubrics.....	145
Output Through Executive Functions: Templates	146
Output Through Executive Functions: Visual Reminders	148
Output Through Transition to Adulthood: Visual Presentation of Goals.....	149
Section V Strategies for Assessment	
Providing Multiple Means of Assessment	152
Considerations.....	153
Assessment Through Testing: Adapted Tests.....	157
Assessment Through Testing: Retesting	159
Assessment Through Testing: Computer Practice Tests	160
Assessment Through Testing: Activities with Products.....	161
Assessment Through Testing: Entry and Exit Responses	162
Assessment Through Homework: CHOICE!	163
Assessment Through Homework: Family Projects.....	165
Assessment Through Homework: Peer Groups.....	167
Assessment Through Performance Assessment: Family Message Journals.....	169
Assessment Through Performance Assessment: Solving Real-World Problems.....	170
Assessment Through Portfolio Assessment: Ability Profiles.....	172
Assessment Through Portfolio Assessment: Responsive Report Cards.....	174
Assessment Through Self-Evaluation: "I Can..." Sheets	175
Assessment Through Self-Evaluation: Learning Logs.....	176
Assessment Through Self-Evaluation: IRS Questions.....	178
Assessment for Self-Evaluation: Three Cups	179
Section VI A Living Resource	
Reflections for Additional Strategies.....	182
Theory Books.....	183
Strategy Books and Materials	184

First-Hand Narratives.....	185
Web Sites.....	185
References	195
Index	199



About the Author

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Dr. Rapp is Associate Professor of Inclusive Education at St. John Fisher College, where she teaches courses on inclusive education pedagogy, assessment, classroom management, and diversity issues. Dr. Rapp holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and psychology from the State University of New York at Potsdam and master's and doctoral degrees in special education from Michigan State University. Prior to her experience in teacher education, Dr. Rapp taught many grade levels in a variety of settings, from fully inclusive classrooms to residential special education schools. All of these experiences reinforced her belief that all children can learn and that all children should learn together in inclusive settings. Dr. Rapp's current research interests include universal design for learning throughout the school years and college. She is the coauthor of the textbook *Teaching Everyone: An Introduction to Inclusive Education* (coauthored with K.L. Arndt; Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2012), and she presents at local, state, national, and international conferences on differentiation of instruction, teacher education, and inclusion. She serves on the Board of Directors of TASH. Dr. Rapp's spare time is spent with her husband and three children, riding bikes, hiking, playing board games, reading, watching movies, and enjoying Owasco Lake.

SECTION II

Strategies for Engagement...

Through Space	21
Through Materials	25
Through Classroom Management	29
Through Technology	37
Through Content Instruction	42
Through Social Interaction	47
Through Executive Functions	52
Through Transition to Adulthood	57





Jobs

Create authentic classroom jobs. Job charts are ubiquitous in classrooms. To engage all students, classroom jobs should be more than just busy work. Titles for jobs should be the same as professional positions so that students can gain experience in areas of interest while feeling their efforts have a true impact on the classroom community. Rather than rotating small jobs to every student for a brief time, consider offering complex jobs needing many workers that are assigned for longer stretches so that students can develop higher level skills and solve problems relating to the work. Realistically not everyone in a community holds every job, but each person should do something to contribute to the community. Some people explore various jobs throughout their career, whereas others maintain one job over time.

Try This

Christopher Simmons, a fifth-grade teacher, has students apply and interview for positions of Class Captain (takes care of morning attendance and lunch count and facilitates class meetings), Archivist (manages lesson materials and distributes handouts), Fire Chief (leads the line and takes attendance during a fire drill), Chairman of the Boards (cleans the whiteboards and sets up the SMART Board), Mail Carrier (delivers notes, paperwork to the office or other classrooms), Zookeeper (feeds class pets and cleans the habitats), Interior Designer (creates bulletin board displays), Librarian (manages the books and bins in the class library), Tech Specialist (turns on and off equipment as needed), Classroom Super (manages classroom clean-up), Gofer (fetches supplies or information from areas of the classroom or school), and Social Committee Members (plan parties and other events).

Why This Works

- **Research base.** Johnson and Thomas (2009) indicated that jobs that matter are part of caring classrooms that promote a sense of community, feelings of empowerment, and moral sensibility.
- **Student involvement.** Creating classroom jobs facilitates the highest level of student involvement. It makes it possible for teachers to step back and allow the students to completely run certain aspects of the classroom. Students can actively apply, interview, and evaluate their own and others' job performances.
- **Reasonable use.** Training for the jobs will take more time at the beginning of the school year but will quickly diminish when students teach each other.
- **Expectations maintained.** Classroom jobs up the ante for students in terms of responsibility and self-management. In addition to academics, students are expected to maintain the physical classroom and contribute to the community, which is a lifelong skill.

(continued)



- **Equity and universality.** The authentic nature of the jobs, the choices provided, and the expectation that *all* students will contribute to the classroom sends the message that the classroom belongs to everyone and is the responsibility of everyone.

IF ... THEN

If classroom jobs are used so that the teacher can determine level of independence and mastery on a daily or weekly basis while students practice and demonstrate job-related skills, then this can also be a strategy for **Assessment.**

ASSESSMENT

